

## Former postdoc honored for research

By Eddy Ball

Former NIEHS and NTP trainee Pui-Ling "Melissa" Chan, D.Eng., has been recognized for her research by Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), where she has been an assistant professor of environmental sciences since joining the university in 2011.

SIUE announced in a July 16 [press release](#)

(<http://siuewardsville.tumblr.com/post/90584252956/siue-2014-vaughnie-lindsay-new-investigator-award-to-that-Chan>)

(<http://www.siue.edu/artsandsciences/environment/faculty/>)

is the recipient of the 2014 Vaughnie Lindsay New Investigator Award. The award recognizes tenure-track faculty members whose scholarly activities have the promise of making significant contributions to their fields of study and to the university in general. Along with recognition, the award includes a research grant of \$12,500 from the university, for Chan to pursue her research on the blood-brain barrier response to drugs and environmental chemicals.

"Supporting young investigators who have the potential for making significant advancements in their area is important to the development of their research careers," said Jerry Weinberg, Ph.D., associate provost for research and dean of the Graduate School at SIUE.

### Chan's research agenda

Chan's current research focuses on understanding how the blood-brain barrier (BBB) can impact the neurological absorption of potentially harmful consumer products, such as pesticides or pharmaceuticals. The goal of her research is to fundamentally advance the field of extrapolation from *in vitro* to *in vivo* studies.

According to Chan, the preliminary results of this research will be used to improve laboratory methods used in producing these materials, and to develop useful tools and biomarkers for public health risk assessment.

During her career, Chan has published 11 peer-reviewed articles, and contributed to a book, "Endocrine-disrupting chemicals: An overview." She has also served in various roles in several service organizations, and is the current chair of the Environmental Science Division at the Illinois State Academy of Science.

A native of Malaysia, Chan completed her doctorate in global environment engineering from Kyoto University in Japan, prior to joining a molecular toxicology group headed by former NIEHS associate director Christopher Portier, Ph.D., in 2007, where she studied environmental systems biology and climate change modeling (see [story](#)). Following Portier's departure from NIEHS, Chan joined the NTP Biomolecular Screening Branch (BSB), where she worked with BSB head Raymond Tice, Ph.D., and toxicologist Michael DeVito, Ph.D.



Chan was also awarded a [BRIDGE Fellowship Award](#) (<http://thisweekincas.com/2013/09/08/the-japan-society-for-the-promotion-of-science-selects-chan-for-bridge-fellowship/>) in 2013 from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. (Photo courtesy of Melissa Chan)

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